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PUC gives nod to eminent domain power for pipeline company - Natural Gas articles

PUC gives nod to eminent domain power for pipeline company

By David Falchek (Staff Writer)

Published: May 20, 2011

Read more: <http://citizensvoice.com/news/drilling/puc-gives-nod-to-eminent-domain-power-for-pipeline-company-1.1149410#ixzz1MtpAGcgn>

The state Public Utility Commission intends to declare natural gas pipeline company Laser Northeast Gathering a public utility, giving it the power to condemn private property by eminent domain. By a 3-2 vote, the commission tossed back to Administrative Law Judge Susan D. Colwell her recommendation to deny Laser's application for a "certificate of public convenience," which would grant it utility status and the right to wield eminent domain.

The narrow majority of the commission disagreed with Judge Colwell's arguments that the commission lacked the authority to regulate the activity and that Laser didn't meet the definition of a public utility.

Rejecting Judge Colwell's legal reasoning, the commission majority sent the recommendation back with a narrow charge: Determine if granting a certificate of public convenience is in the public interest. In a fiery dissent, Commissioner James Cawley warned of "grave implications for individual Pennsylvanians and their communities." He said his colleagues' decision would upset the balance in easement negotiations, giving more power to pipeline companies. "The upset of this balance is not in the public interest and is sufficient reason to deny Laser's application," Cawley wrote, joined in his opposition by Tyrone Christie.

Joining Gardner in remanding the Laser requests were Robert Powelson and John Coleman Jr. Collection and gathering pipelines will directly impact more property owners than the gas wells expected to multiply over the next several decades tapping Marcellus Shale gas. Every well has an estimated lifespan of 30 to 40 years and has to be connected to an interstate pipeline. Judge Colwell argued a pipeline collection and gathering system did not serve the "public," but rather natural gas well owners. But the commission said the legal definition of public "is not confined to the entire public," but rather the individuals or companies requiring the service.

Read more: <http://citizensvoice.com/news/drilling/puc-gives-nod-to-eminent-domain-power-for-pipeline-company-1.1149410#ixzz1Mtoscza2>

State study shows no hazard in shale well air emissions <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/11140/1147855-113.stm>

Water treatment plant in cross hairs

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/regional/s_738084.html

Benton holds second hearing on proposed gas well <http://thetimes-tribune.com/news/benton-holds-second-hearing-on-proposed-gas-well-1.1149580>

Pipeline's status returned to courts

http://www.timesleader.com/news/Pipeline's_status_returned_to_courts_05-19-2011.html

Gas industry executive says company in Fayette for long time

http://www.heraldstandard.com/news/local_news/gas-industry-executive-says-company-in-fayette-for-long-time/article_b3fef652-9510-5697-b17c-87d7caf03a81.html

PUC ruling impacts local Marcellus pipeline http://www.heraldstandard.com/news/local_news/puc-ruling-impacts-local-marcellus-pipeline/article_41332a51-2299-5003-bc21-da8f3ea87936.html

Boomtown

<http://www.sungazette.com/page/content.detail/id/564181/Boomtown.html?nav=5011>

Gas drilling company leases office space in downtown

<http://www.sungazette.com/page/content.detail/id/564182/Gas-drilling-company-leases-office-space-in-downtown.html?nav=5011>

DEP says Marcellus operations in Northcentral Region show no impact on short-term air quality

<http://thedailyreview.com/news/dep-says-marcellus-operations-in-northcentral-region-show-no-impact-on-short-term-air-quality-1.1149466>

Commissioners name members of Schuylkill County's Marcellus Shale Task Force

<http://republicanherald.com/news/commissioners-name-members-of-schuylkill-county-s-marcellus-shale-task-force-1.1149621>

Natural gas opponents protest lack of severance tax

<http://www.altoonamirror.com/page/content.detail/id/550335/Natural-gas-opponents-protest-lack-of-severance-tax.html?nav=742>

Drilling impact fee won't go to those who ban it

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/state/s_737888.html

Scarnati's impact fee bill deserves consideration

http://www.pennlive.com/letters/index.ssf/2011/05/scarnatis_impact_fee_bill_dese.html

Jackson residents leery of gas plant

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/regional/s_737740.html

Official: Rules inadequate for gas activities

http://www.timesleader.com/news/Official_Rules_inadequate_for_gas_activities_05-18-2011.html

Grassroots initiative launched to inform public about natural gas development

<http://citizensvoice.com/news/grassroots-initiative-launched-to-inform-public-about-natural-gas-development-1.1149032#axzz1MnUeFn9b>

Inquirer Editorial: Save our water

http://www.philly.com/philly/opinion/20110519_Inquirer_Editorial_Save_our_water.html

Private firms poised to treat wastewater

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/business/s_737873.html

Communities seek public's input on drilling ordinances, bans

http://www.pittsburghlive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/news/pittsburgh/s_737796.html

UGI gas rates to increase 3.9 percent

http://www.mcall.com/business/mc-allentown-ugi-rates-20110517_0_926803.story

Drilling fee comes up in the Senate

http://www.philly.com/philly/news/20110517_Drilling_fee_comes_up_in_the_Senate.html

Bill would assess local impact fee on shale drilling <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/11137/1147105-454-0.stm>

Politicians: Marcellus shale gas tax will eventually happen

<http://www.delcotimes.com/articles/2011/05/17/news/doc4dd1e65a09eb7066043972.txt?viewmode=fullstory>

Pileggi: Gas issue not necessarily connected to budget deal

<http://www.dailylocal.com/articles/2011/05/17/news/srv0000011758376.txt?viewmode=fullstory>

Susquehanna tops 'most endangered rivers' list <http://www.post-gazette.com/pg/11137/1147049-454.stm>

DEP cites persistent flaws in Cabot wells and keeps drilling on hold in parts of Dimock <http://thetimes-tribune.com/news/dep-cites-persistent-flaws-in-cabot-wells-and-keeps-drilling-on-hold-in-parts-of-dimock-1.1147813#axzz1MbVVS2eu>

Group: Susquehanna is 'most endangered'

http://www.timesleader.com/news/Group_Susquehanna_is_'most_endangered'_05-16-2011.html

Natural gas portfolio needs consideration

<http://www.sungazette.com/page/content.detail/id/564036/Natural-gas-portfolio-needs-consideration.html?nav=5004>

Mon River test: PAW quality not impacted by drilling compounds <http://www.observer-reporter.com/or/washnews/05-17-2011-water-ok>